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LETTER VIII.

Vale of Usk—Country Seats—Ancient Monument at Allt-yr-Esgyr—Bwlch—Crickhowel—Llangadoc—Seats—Conclusion.

SIR,—On the road from Brecon, down the Vale of Usk, the country is good and the landscape exceedingly pleasant, abounding in fine meadows, as well as corn land on every side, while the chain of lofty hills to the South give an air of grandeur to the scenery, and the woodlands diversify the prospect. The Usk affords the angler the greatest attraction for his favourite amusement, as no fish can surpass the trout of this river. About two miles from Brecon you may turn on the left, and the road leads to Lanvihangel Tal-y-llyn, Talgarth, Trevecca, and Langorse, near to which is the famed Lake or Mere called Llyn Savathan, where the tradition of the country states an ancient city stood, and was swallowed up by an earthquake, at a season of dissolute festivity*. Turn to the right, and the road leads to the village of Lanvrynach, near to which stood Caer Bannau; and it is now dignified with an elegant modern mansion recently erected by Captain Clifton. The style is Gothic, with castellated turrets, and the inside corresponds with the exterior form of the building, but the situation on a flat is not so well adapted to display this elegant structure, while at the same time it is exposed to all winds. In a few years the plantations and shrubberies will afford it both ornament and shelter. On a sloping ground is Maes-y-derwen, or Oakfield, the handsome Villa of John Parry Wilkins, Esq. There is a road on this side of the river by Pinkelly Castle, which gives name to the Hundred, but returning to the main road you go through Llanhamlach, and leaving Peterstone, the seat of T. Harcourt Powel, Esq. on the right, you soon come to Llansaintfread Church, not far from which on an eminence is a remarkable *cromlech*, as represented by some antiquarians, but which in fact is but a small one compared with many that are to be seen. Farther on is Skethrog† once of great note, and near to it is an ancient

* The particulars of this legendary tradition may be seen in vol. ii. of the CAMBRO-BRITON, p. 400.—ED.

† Qu: Ysgithrog?—ED.

stone monument on the right side of the road, inscribed with the name of Victorinus*.

To the North of Llansaintfread Church is an abrupt eminence, called Allt-y-Esgyr. "From this summit," says our County Historian, "the prospect is worth examining. Upon the South lies the vale of Usk with its serpentine river: to the West is Breeon and the adjacent Country, terminated by Bwlch Aberbraw (on the Caermarthen road): on the North you catch a glimpse of the country about Talgarth, and in the back-ground the Radnorshire hills. Contracting the view to the foot of the hill, the beautiful Lake of Llyn Savathan appears surrounded by the pleasing village of Lanvihangel, the churches of Llangarty and Cathedin, the ruins of Blanallyn Castle and the church and village of Langorse." As you mount the Bwlch hill, you have Buckland, a fine seat, on your right, and by which the road ought to go for the ease of the traveller; but, in ascending the hill, you can take a fine retrospect of the country you are leaving, and, in descending on the other side, you are struck with a charming landscape, superior to that you have just left, and which cannot be surpassed for either richness or variety. The lofty hills on the other side of the Usk form a fine contrast to the fertility and beauty of the vale, wearing the fairest and most enchanting form of nature.

The little town of Crickhowel derives some importance from the fine country in which it is situated, and from the iron works among the neighbouring hills. Near it is the delightful village of Llangadoc, and the mildness of the air and the pleasantness of the surrounding scenery, hill and dale, woods, meads and water, form a powerful attraction for genteel resort. There are several fine seats, Sir William Ouseley's, Mr. Hodgkiss's, and others. Near Crickhowel is Lanbeder, the residence of the Rev. Canon Payne, the particular friend of the Historian of Brecknockshire. Through Lanbeder to the confines of Herefordshire is a romantic ride of indescribable beauty, and, coming down from this village to Crickhowel, you have a

* The monument, here alluded to, is a stone pillar erected in the highway with the inscription "N—— filius Victorini." Notwithstanding the name, Mr. E. Llwyd considers it to be later than the time of the Romans.—
ED.

charming view of the Usk and its fertile bottom, with the hills rising aloft to screen and defend it.

About two miles from Crickhowel you enter Monmouthshire. Now we may take our choice, whether to enter that enchanting country, or roam among the Iron Works of Beaufort and Lanelly, or else return to Brecon along the turnpike road. I may, at a future time, add something by way of supplement to this sketch.

Hoping I have not tired the readers of the CAMBRO-BRITON*,

I remain, Sir,

Yn dra serchog,

Your Friend and well-wisher,

April 10th, 1822.

IEUAN.

EXCERPTA.

THE WENDI.

"AN ACCOUNT of the People called WENDEN in Germany; in a Letter written from Berlin to JOHN CHAMBERLAYNE, Esq. by Dr. JABLONSKI, and translated out of Latin by the Author of the *Memoirs of Literature*†."

"SIR,—Among the several books, which you have been pleased to send me, and for which I return you a thousand thanks, I have read, with great pleasure, the design of the Rev. John Richardson for promoting the conversion of the Irish Papists with the help of books, printed in their own language. He has wisely joined together two things, which cannot be divided without great prejudice to so good a cause: I mean that he intends to carry on his pious undertaking with proper and lawful means. And I am persuaded, that, when he shall put them in execution, they will be attended, through God's blessing, with a very happy success.

* We are sure we can answer for our readers, as well as ourselves, that, ofar from being tired with IEUAN's agreeable Letters, they would hail with delight his "supplementary sketch."—Ed.

† This is extracted from vol. iv. p. 191 of the "Memoirs," and is the account which we promised last month to insert in the present Number.—Ed.